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# Rape Education For A Busy World : Creating A Brief Rape Prevention Program

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RAPE EDUCATION FOR A BUSY WORLD:  
CREATING A BRIEF RAPE PREVENTION PROGRAM

being

A Thesis Presented to the Graduate Faculty  
of the Fort Hays State University in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Science

by

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## ABSTRACT

Rape occurs too frequently in this country. What legally constitutes rape is a contentious issue and theorists debate the causes of rape. The current study discusses four theories which attempt to explain the causes of rape, including the just world, evolutionary, feminist, and social learning theories. Although theorists debate about the cause of rape, they agree the prevention of rape is important. Rape prevention often takes the form of educational programs requiring a large time commitment on the part of participants. No research study has attempted to use a brief method of rape education. Pornography research has shown educational briefings are useful as a method of lowering negative attitudes toward women and attitudes supportive of violence against women. Therefore, these briefings prevent attitudes that may contribute to rape. This study attempted to use pornographic briefings as a rape education program. The researcher recruited 128 participants from a public university in the Midwestern United States. The researcher assigned participants to one of three groups: the brief educational group, the traditional educational group, or the control group. In the brief group, participants were asked to read the briefing and fill out a survey. Participants in the traditional group watched a traditional rape educational video before completing the survey. The control group participants simply filled out the survey.

A series of one-way MANOVAs were conducted to determine if group membership (i.e., traditional, brief, or control) impacted scores on the combined dependent variables. These were conducted separately for males and females due to

research finding a significant affect of sex. The MANOVA was not significant for males or females, indicating group membership did not affect Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence, Rape Myth Acceptance, or the Attraction to Sexual Aggression. The research did find females endorsed less attitudes accepting of rape myths and violence against women than men. These findings imply the brief education piece was not successful in reducing attitudes supportive of violence against women and rape myths. There were flaws in the current research including the dated nature of the traditional video. The limitations of the current study result in inconclusive findings and leave room for further research. It is possible that future research will find a brief rape education piece effective.

*Keywords:* Rape Education, Sexual Assault, Briefing, Pornography

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## INTRODUCTION

Rape is an enormous problem in our country. Lawmakers define rape as, “the unlawful sexual intercourse with a female without her consent” (Campbell & Johnson, 1997, p. 256). Researchers create educational programs to lessen the chances a person will experience rape. Such educational programs are usually lengthy and require a time commitment from participants. The current study used a brief educational program—referred to as briefings—borrowed from pornography research. Researchers have found these briefings effective in decreasing negative attitudes toward women and attitudes accepting of violence against women. Before discussing the details of the current study, relevant literature will be reviewed

### **Rape Statistics**

According to the United States Department of Justice (2005), in 2004-2005 64,080 women were raped. More recently, the United States Department of Justice (2011) estimated there were 83,425 rapes in 2011. However, researchers in the past have reminded all that the statistics are likely under estimates due to not all rapes being reported (Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). Tjaden and Thoennes (1998) conducted a study for the National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control and found; 17.6 % of women and 3 % of men have experienced rape. Of the 17.6 % of women who experienced rape, 14.8 % experienced completed rape and 2.8 % experienced attempted rape. Of the 3 % of men who experienced rape, 2.1 % experienced completed rape and

0.9 % experienced attempted rape. The authors estimate roughly 1 in 6 women and 1 in 32 men will experience rape in their lifetime. It is important to realize that the way researchers and lawmakers define rape can have an effect on the number of people who have reported experiencing it.

### **Definition of Rape**

Campbell and Johnson (1997) contend what constitutes rape varies from state to state, which creates uncertainty about the definition of rape. Lawmakers have reformed the traditional definition of rape, “unlawful sexual intercourse with a female without her consent,” (Campbell & Johnson, 1997, p. 256) in the last three decades to move the burden of proof from the victim's to the assailant's hands. The older definition requires the victim to show there was no consent, and, in some states, require the victim show the perpetrator used force. The older version of the law left the burden of proof in the hands of the victim. Reforms to the laws are an attempt to change the focus of the prosecution in rape cases from the victim's behavior to the assailant's behavior.

Enrich (1987) argues there have been three major changes to rape law. The first change is there is no longer an emphasis on consent by the victim; instead, there is an emphasis on the use of force by the perpetrator. The emphasis on the use of force changes the focus from the behavior of the victim, to the behavior of the assailant. The second major change claims consent is not an issue defendants can raise in trial, unless they use it as a defense. That is – a victim is no longer required to show he or she did not consent. Instead, the perpetrator must prove the victim did consent; however, a lack of

resistance is not a form of consent. Finally, most states have passed laws to limit or prevent the defense from asking a victim about his or her sexual history. This change focuses the attention of the legal system on the actions of the assailant and not that of the victim.

### **Causes of Rape**

Where the law struggles to define rape, researchers struggle to define its causes. The uncertainty surrounding sexual assault legislation echoes in sexual assault research. There are multiple theories outlining the causes of rape, however the most popular theories are the feminist; the just world, which is the sub-theory of the attribution theory; social learning; and evolutionary theories of rape. The most controversial of these theories is the just world theory.

The just world theory of rape is a sub-theory of the attribution theory of rape. The history of the attribution theory of rape begins with writings of Gilmartin-Zena (1983), Mendelson (1963), Von Hentig (1948), and Wolfgang (1958). These authors originated the idea that a victim can have a role in the cause of a crime. Amir (1976) then applied the writings of these authors to rape; arguing victims precipitate rape. The behavior of a victim and situational factors determine if an assailant will commit a rape. There are certain characteristics of a victim that leave them vulnerable to rape.

The just world theory is a result of the research of Melvin Lerner (1980). Lerner and Simmons (1966) assert most people believe the world is a just place where good things happen to good people. Therefore, when bad things happen to an individual, that

individual must deserve the situation. People need to infer victim responsibility, because they do not want to believe negative events occur randomly. If negative events occur randomly, then this leaves people vulnerable to such events.

Attribution theory research looks for characteristics of victims that would make it likely for people to attribute blame on them for their rape. Grubb and Harrower (2008) found if a victim knows his or her attacker, participants are likely to find them at fault for the attack. Research has also shown participants rated victims who were thin to be more at fault for a rape than overweight victims (Clark & Lawson, 2009). Sadly, even prosecutors make judgments about what cases to prosecute based on attributes of the victim (Bejchner & Spohn, 2012).

Attribution theorists also look at characteristics of individuals that make them likely to blame a rape victim. Results showed that men are more likely than women to blame rape victims, and participants with similarities to the rape victims are less likely to blame the victims (Grubb & Harrower, 2008). Participants who have higher levels of “rape myth acceptance” were likely to attribute fault to the victims (Clark & Lawson, 2009). Victim blaming is not just something the public does—researchers have found therapists also blame the victim of rape (Idisis, Ben-David, & Ben-Nachum, 2007). However, on an encouraging note, researchers have found, as education increases, the blaming of the rape victim decreases (Postmus, McMahon, Warrenner, & Macri, 2011).

Bandura (1973) created the next theory – the social learning theory. According to the social learning theory, learning occurs either when another person models a behavior

for a person, or when a person experiences consequences for his or her behavior.

Through modeling, individuals are able to move beyond their behavioral repertoires by watching another person be rewarded or punished for a behavior. An individual then learns to continue or discontinue that behavior. It is through consequences that behaviors are either strengthened or inhibited. Individuals can also experience reinforcement vicariously, that is, they learn through the consequences of other's behavior. Abnormal behavior occurs when individuals have dysfunctional learning histories.

Tyler, Brownridge, and Melander (2011) apply social learning theory to rape, arguing rapists engage in such behavior because they have learned to. Children raised in violent homes learn to be violent and to justify this behavior. Therefore, children of these households learn not only to be perpetrators, but might become victims of violence, as well (Edwards, Kearns, Gidycz, & Calhoun, 2012). Findings such as abuse in childhood relate to later victimization (Brownridge, 2006) and perpetration (Herrenkohl et al., 2004; Swinford, DeMaris, Cernkovich, & Giordano, 2000) support these assertions.

Social learning theory contends that aggressive individuals have experienced aggressive models and other sources of vicarious reinforcement in the past (Christopher, Madura, & Weaver, 1998). It is more common for males to become sexually aggressive than females, because males have more aggressive models than females. Aggressive people are more likely to have aggressive friends to model that behavior. Wood, Gove, Wilson, and Cochran (1997) conducted a study of criminal behavior, finding perpetrators of criminal behavior experience reward from it.

A third theory attempting to explain the cause of rape is evolutionary theory. The evolutionary theory of rape was founded by Thiessen (1983), Thornhill (1980), Thornhill and Thornhill (1983), and Palmer (1988). According to evolutionary theory, rape is a strategy of reproduction with an evolutionarily function (Thornhill & Palmer, 2000). Males' desire for sex motivates rape (Thornhill, 1980). Men compete for mating privileges with females (Thornhill & Palmer, 2000) and when a man has no access to women, he loses the competition.

Therefore, rape is a means for men to reproduce by circumventing women's choice (Thornhill & Palmer, 2000). These men have no other means by which to have sexual access to women. This is in direct contrast with the mainstream theory that a man's desire for violence and dominance causes rape. Evolutionary theory contends this assertion as incorrect. According to evolutionary theory, in order to prevent rape, educational programs must incorporate an evolutionary explanation of rape.

Research based on the evolutionary theory of rape looks to show power does not motivate rape; instead, it is a means of creating offspring. As proof that rape is an evolutionary strategy, Thornhill and Palmer (2000) cite forced copulation in animals. In addition, rape occurs in all known cultures and in differing frequency and, depending on the context, is evidence for an evolutionary basis of rape. Finally, there are lower recidivism rates in castrated sex offenders; providing evidence, that rape is a strategy of copulation. Males committing robbery are more likely to sexually assault women who are aged 15-29 and likely to become pregnant (Felson & Cundiff, 2012). The offender's

age also predicts sexual assault in robberies – those aged 12 to 30 are more likely to commit sexual assault than robbers who are older, which corresponds to higher fertility in males. Young men commit the majority of rape-murders and theft-murders. Women in their reproductive years have a greater risk of being rape-murdered, and reproductive-aged women are underrepresented as victims of theft-murder (Shackelford, 2002).

A final point in evolutionary theory research is that rapists are likely to be from a lower socio-economic status (Thornhill & Palmer, 2000). Rapists usually are of a lower socio-economic status and because of their lack of wealth have lower access to potential mates. Vaughan (2003) found a lower number of rapes committed by high-status men against strangers than low-status men. There were more rapes committed by high-status offenders against partners than were committed by low-status offenders.

A final theory to explain the cause of rape is feminist theory. Feminist theory contends our society is a patriarchy, where men have the legal and cultural right to control women (Smith, 1990). This legal and cultural right allows men to rape, batter, and kill women when they perceive their dominance was threatened. The law in western societies no longer allows the physical punishment of wives; however, women are still subordinate to men and are often the victim of male violence. Patriarchy is the main source of violence against women. The origin of violence against women, for feminists, is the social context that defines women as subordinate to men.

Feminist theorists attempt to use research to show our patriarchal society causes rape; the following are examples of such research. Men with beliefs supportive of



patriarchy were more likely to have committed violence against women (Smith, 1990) and husbands who have patriarchal beliefs are more likely to have committed violence against their wives (Eng, Li, Mulsow, & Fischer, 2010). Males who have sexist attitudes were more likely to have committed violence against their partners (Allen, Swan, & Raghavan, 2009). Finally, the belief that it is the right of husbands to injure their wives correlates with committing violence against women (Ozcakir, Bayram, Ergin, Selimoglu, & Bilgel, 2008).

### **Rape Prevention**

Regardless of the cause of rape, researchers agree society must do more to prevent rape. Rape prevention is an extensively researched topic. Edwards, Turchik, Dardis, Reynolds, and Gidycz (2011) suggest there are factors that make a person likely to commit rape such as negative attitudes towards women and specifically, the belief in rape myths. Negative attitudes toward women are operationally defined as: attitudes that are less supportive of sexual equality and equality in general of women, belief in rape myths, and the assigning of a lesser punishment to rapists (Davies, 1997). Rape myths are defined as: “prejudicial, stereotyped, or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists that create a climate hostile to rape victims,” (Burt, 1980, p. 217). Other researchers also make the claim that belief in rape myths can make a person likely to commit rape (Loh, Gidycz, Lobo, & Luthra, 2005; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). How do rape myths make a person likely to commit a sexual assault?

Rape myths can influence a person’s sexual scripts (Ryan, 2011). Sexual scripts

determine a person's sexual behavior and their sexual attitudes and can be impacted by a person's culture. Many people hold sexual scripts about rape that are in error. Such erroneous scripts may inhibit rape victims from recognizing they have experienced rape and they may allow rapists to engage in rape without acknowledging it was rape.

Heterosexuals hold dating scripts such as; a woman will say "no" when she means "yes," that are erroneous and that allow rape to occur (Tritsch, 1999). In both dating scripts and rape scripts, men use manipulative tactics to obtain sex (Littleton & Axsom, 2003).

There is an overlap between the scripts for dating and for rape, creating confusion about when a rape occurs. Therefore, it is important to include information about rape myths in a rape education program, to change sexual scripts allowing rape to occur.

Researchers have conducted many studies on the best way to prevent sexual assaults, including changing rape myth beliefs and self-reported likelihood of raping to judge how effective such a program is at preventing rapes. For education to be effective at preventing rape, education must be able to prevent crime in general. Research has shown that education programs can prevent crime (Center on Crime, Communities, and Culture, 1997; Haughton, 1855). Haughton (1855) was one of the first researchers to argue education can prevent crime.

### **Education as Crime Prevention**

In Haughton's paper, he points to statistics showing criminals are largely undereducated. Indeed, the majority of those individuals studied were illiterate. Next, he examines a number of case studies where the population is educated. One such case is

the Lowell Factory. At this factory, young women work long hours but still manage to study for two hours a night. In this community, the rates of crime are very low. For Haughton, being educated makes one less likely to commit crime. Finally, the author points to lower rates of crimes committed in countries that have compulsory education, which is a period of educational attendance required by law

The Center on Crime, Communities, and Culture created a report in 1997 on education as crime prevention, which reviewed several studies. The findings of this study indicate there is a consensus in the research that education leads to a lower rate of crime. One such study, Sherman et al. (1998), found that home visits for infants by nurses, preschool classes with weekly home visits, family therapy and parent training for delinquent and at-risk preadolescents, development for innovation in schools, enforcement of clear norms in schools, teaching of social competency, coaching high-risk youths in thinking skills, vocational training for male offenders, nuisance abatement action on landlords, extra police patrols, monitoring and incarceration of repeat offenders, on-scene arrests for domestic abuse, rehabilitation programs for risk-focused treatments, and therapeutic treatment programs for drug users were research methods that proved effective in preventing crime. Harer (1994) conducted a study of recidivism for inmates of federal prisoners, finding that education reduced reoffending.

Lochner and Moretti (2004) conducted a separate study that concluded there was a reduced level of criminal recidivism when education became compulsory. This is logical, because there are a number of reasons for why education will affect crime, such

as; education increases the amount of money a person can earn, as well as education can alter a person's likelihood of engaging in crime. Education can affect a person's risk aversion by giving him/her more to lose. However, there is a significant difference in the crime rate between African-American males and Caucasian American males. However, when researchers controlled for the level of education, the effect went away.

Ali and Peek (2009) conducted a study of the determinants of the crime rate in the state of Virginia, finding that education could lower crime rate. The authors looked at several variables related to rate of crime—specifically, the expenditure of money on education per pupil. The education a person receives will increase or decrease their ability to achieve their future goals. Schools also provide behavioral conditioning, social modeling, interactions, and value and identity shaping. Therefore, schools can reduce criminal motivation and increase the effectiveness of social control. Indeed, greater funding of education will decrease criminal behavior.

Studies of violence prevention in schools have found educational programs are effective in preventing school violence (Dusenbury, Falco, Lake, Brannigan, & Bosworth, 1997). However, across studies, there is variability in the effectiveness of the education programs. There are a number of elements of an educational program that are needed for it to be effective. These elements are: including the family; including peers; including media and the community; starting the program as early as possible; tailoring the program developmentally; promoting social and personal competencies; incorporating different techniques; taking ethnic identity into consideration; using a staff trained in

positive reinforcement; and using a design that creates norms in schools that are against violence.

Educational programs are also effective in preventing corruption in the police department. Osse (1997) described a multiple session course set up by the College for Criminal Investigation and Crime Control. The lessons attempt to lower corruption in the police force. Osse merely provided anecdotal evidence of its success. According to Osse, a goal of the classes was to make police officers aware of when they make decisions that could lead to corruption. The officers become aware of the decisions they made after taking this course, which Osse claims is proof of its effectiveness. Osse did not provide any other evidence of the class' effectiveness.

Finally, education programs are effective in preventing fraud (Peterson, 2004). Auditors have difficulty detecting fraud because they have not received sufficient education on fraud. Auditors receiving proper education could prevent financial crimes such as the Enron, WorldCom, and Xerox scandals. Such an education program should focus on teaching auditors skills such as financial expertise, motivations of fraud perpetrators, evidence collection, legal elements of fraud, ethical and legal issues, report writing, and critical thinking. Researchers may apply these skills to education about crime in general.

### **Sexual Assault Education**

As previously stated, research has shown education can prevent crime in general;. however, studies have also looked at the ability of education to prevent sexual

assault, specifically. Research on the effectiveness of sexual assault educational programs has found that these programs are effective (Anderson & Whinston, 2005; Berg et al., 1998; Foubert & Newberry, 2006; Hillenbrand-Gunn, Heppner, Mauch, & Park, 2010) in changing attitudes toward rape and in increasing knowledge about rape (Anderson & Whiston, 2005). For example, an educational program reduced rape myth belief and increased empathy for rape victims (Foubert & Newberry, 2006). In addition, educational programs challenged rape myth beliefs and decreased rape-supportive attitudes (Hillenbrand-Gunn et al., 2010).

Educational programs provided information to participants that lowered their rape-supportive attitudes (Love & Geer, 2003). Participants provided with a series of videos about sexual assault were less accepting of rape myths, had fewer attitudes supportive of interpersonal violence, and had less adversarial sexual beliefs (O'Donohue, Yeater, & Fanetti, 2003). Participants who took classes focused on violence against women had less negative attitudes toward women and rape victims (Currier & Carlson, 2009). An educational program with sailors resulted in lower rape myth acceptance and higher rates of rape empathy (Rau et al., 2010). Therefore, research shows educational programs can reduce rape myth acceptance, likelihood of aggression, and negative attitudes toward women. These changes will decrease the likelihood that a person will commit rape.

Although the sexual assault education programs are effective, they do not have the same effect on males and females. Many studies have found female participants

endorse less negative attitudes toward women and attitudes accepting of aggression than do male participants (Anderson & Whiston, 2005). The effectiveness of sexual assault education programs varied based on sex of the audience. Specifically, the programs were more affective with female participants. Female participants endorsed fewer negative attitudes toward women than did male participants. As a result of these findings, researchers know that males and females react differently to sexual assault education.

Researchers have used multiple presentation methods in sexual assault education. Such methods are presenting a video to participants (Love & Geer, 2003; O'Donohue et al., 2003; Rau et al., 2011); using the classroom as the setting for sexual assault education (Currier & Carlson, 2009) and other studies use lectures or slides (Rau et al., 2011). Finally, some studies use discussion (Rau et al., 2011). Sexual assault education programs often use multiple presentation methods. Schewe (2002) argues multiple presentation methods are the most effective and, ideally, researchers would use multiple presentation methods. However, this often is not economically feasible. A more economical alternative would be to find a brief educational piece that is able to produce the same effect. Currently, no research study has attempted to use a brief method of sexual assault education.

### **Brief Education**

Researchers have studied the effectiveness of brief education. Brief education has been effective in helping participants correctly identify the amounts of drinks they actually take (Bergen-Cico, & Kimer, 2010) and has helped nurses to routinely provide

health information to patients (Sand-Jecklin, Murray, Summers, & Watson, 2010), including the ability to provide brief education to asthma patients (Larson et al., 2010).

A specific example of brief education is warning labels. Researchers have found warning labels in print advertisements are effective when placed overtly (Torres, Sierra, & Heiser, 2007). For example, anti-smoking advertisements are effective with high school students (Sabbane, Lowrey, & Chebat, 2009; Smith & Stutts, 2006). Another example of effective warning labels is warning labels on antipsychotic drugs. Such warnings were effective in distributing patient information (Sanfelix-Gimeno et al., 2009). Finally, a study of warning messages included within gambling machines found such warnings effective (Monaghan & Blaszczyk, 2010).

An example of brief education that psychology has found effective is research debriefings. According to Toy, Olsen, and Wright (1989), a debriefing is additional information about an experiment given to participants about the experiment. Researchers give debriefings following an experiment, and usually involve details about the purpose and methods of the study. Researchers specifically discuss any deception used during the research; however, debriefings may take different forms. Some researchers are more complete with their debriefing than are other researchers. Researchers have found debriefings to be effective means of educating research participants (Armstrong et al., 1998; Holmes, 1976; Misra, 1992; Silverman, Shulman, & Wiesenthal, 1970; Smith & Richardson, 1983; Toy, Olsen, & Wright, 1989; Toy, Wright, & Olsen, 2001).



## **Written Education**

Brief education such as debriefings, warning labels, and warning signs often are in written form. Research has shown written education can be effective (Morris & Halperin, 1979; Murphy, Chesson, Walker, Arnold, & Chesson, 2000; Wilson, Mood, & Nordstrom, 2010). For instance, a literature review of effectiveness of written prescription drug information found the majority of the studies indicate the written information can be effective (Morris & Halperin, 1979). In addition, written education can be as effective as video education when providing health care information (Murphy et al., 2000) and pamphlets were effective for patients with reading levels above the 6th grade level (Wilson et al., 2010).

Educational debriefings serve an important task within the scientific community, by allowing researchers to address possible harm to participants of psychological studies (American Psychological Association, 2002). Indeed, psychologists have an ethical duty to address such harm. This study proposes to take a written briefing that has been found effective in pornography studies, and use it as a sexual assault education program. Briefings used in pornographic studies are effective in decreasing attitudes supportive of aggression against women and negative attitudes toward women.

## **Pornography Research**

Researchers have found educational debriefings decrease the negative impacts associated with violent pornography (Allen, D'Alessio, Emmers, & Gebhardt, 1996; Malamuth & Check, 1984). The negative effects of pornography use are increased

negative attitudes toward women and acceptance of violence against women.

Pornography's negative effects are a highly contended and researched topic. This could be because pornography is an available source of entertainment in the United States. The Internet has made sexually explicit material use anonymous, cost-free, and unlimited (Fisher & Barak, 2001). The availability of Internet pornography makes it easy for underage users to have unlimited access to such materials (Freeman-Longo, 2000). Digitized images of pornography are widely circulated in all areas of this country; and that Internet pornography makes available themes such as bestiality and pedophilia, where they were otherwise not available (Rimm, 1995). There is a demand for pornography because of a psychological motivation for variety and novelty (D'Orlando, 2011). This availability of pornography makes it ever important to determine if there is a negative effect associated with the use of it. Some researchers find a negative effect, and others do not. The first negative effect of pornography discussed here is acceptance of violence against women.

Some research shows pornography increases acceptance of violence against women (Bouffard, 2010; Hald, Malamuth, & Yuen, 2010; Kjellgren, Priebe, Syedin, Mossige, & Langstrom, 2011; Malamuth, Hald, & Koss, 2012) and other authors have found pornography use increases actual aggression (Donnerstien & Berkowitz, 1981; Donnerstien & Berrett, 1987; Foubert, Brosi, & Bannon, 2011; Vega & Malamuth, 2007; Ybarra, Mitchell, Hamburger, Diener-West, & Leaf, 2011; Zillmann, Bryant, Comisky, & Geen, 1981). However, some studies established no connection between

violent pornography and actual aggression (Burton, Lebowitz, & Howard, 2010; Diamond, Jozifkova, & Weiss, 2011; Diamond & Uchiyama, 1999; Fisher & Grenier, 1994; 1994; Malamuth & Cenitl, 1986).

Research on the effect of violent pornography has also focused on a second area: negative attitudes toward women. Studies have shown violent pornography increases negative attitudes toward women (Bouffard, 2010; Farley, Macleod, Anderson, & Golding, 2011; Foubert, Brosi, & Bannon, 2011; Garcia, Rutgers, & Camden, 1986; Kjellgren et al., 2011; Linz, Donnerstien, & Penrod, 1988; Peter & Valkenburg, 2011). However, some research has discovered no correlation between exposure to violent pornography and negative attitudes towards women (Davis, Norris, George, Martell, & Heiman, 2006; Klein, Kennedy, & Gorzalka, 2009; Padgett, Brislin-Sultz, & Neal, 1989). Other studies have even found positive effects of viewing pornography. For example, couples may use pornography as a source of information and a stimulus of sexual arousal (Lofgren-Martenson & Mansson, 2010). Watching pornography expanded sexual horizons and created a willingness to explore sexual behaviors through empowerment (Weinberg, Williams, Kleiner, & Irizarry, 2010). Finally, couples that use pornography had an erotic climate that was more permissive than couples who did not use pornography (Daneback, Traeen, & Mansson, 2009).

Several studies indicate educational debriefings can counter violent pornography's possible negative effects. A meta-analysis by Allen et al. (1996) showed no effects of violent pornography or positive effects following the use of debriefings.

Some authors have ascertained that the debriefing made the participants less likely than the control group to endorse rape myths or attitudes supportive of violence against women (Malamuth & Check, 1984). All the studies on educational debriefings show a pattern of reduced harm to pornography users given a debriefing.

Educational debriefings used in pornography research usually take the form of a written handout or recording stating that sexually explicit materials are fictitious and fantasy (Malamuth & Check, 1984). It reminds the participant that women do not enjoy forced sex and that sexually explicit materials depict an unreal fantasy about sexual relations.

### **Hypotheses**

**Overall Hypothesis.** The current study hypothesized participants who received a brief educational program would have less accepting attitudes of aggression against women and negative attitudes toward women than participants given no educational program; and equal to those who received a traditional educational program. The overall hypothesis stems from research finding; sexual assault education programs are successful (Anderson & Whinston, 2005; Berg et al., 1998; Foubert & Newberry, 2006; Hillenbrand-Gunn et al., 2010), brief education programs are effective (Armstrong et al., 1998; Holmes, 1976; Misra, 1992; Silverman, Shulman, & Wiesenthal, 1970; Smith, & Richardson, 1983; Toy et al., 1989; Toy et al., 2001), and briefings used in pornographic research are efficient (Allen et al., 1996; Malamuth & Check, 1984).

**Negative attitudes toward women hypothesis.** When considering negative attitudes toward women, it was predicted that participants who received the brief sexual assault educational program would rate themselves significantly lower on the Rape Myth Acceptance Scale than participants given no educational program; and equal to those who were given a traditional educational program. Research has shown that brief education is effective in decreasing negative attitudes toward women when used in pornography research (Allen et al., 1996; Malamuth & Check, 1984). Therefore, negative attitudes towards women was measured as a dependent variable to assess the effectiveness of sexual assault programs.

**Attitudes supportive of aggression toward women hypothesis.** Next, it was hypothesized that participants given the brief educational program would rate themselves as significantly lower on the Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale and the Attraction to Sexual Aggression Scale than participants given no educational program; and equal to those who were given a traditional educational program. Allen et al. (1996) and Malamuth and Check (1984) found the brief education used in pornography effective in reducing attitudes supportive of violence against women. Therefore, attitudes supportive of violence against women was measured as a dependent variable to assess the effectiveness of sexual assault programs.

**Sex hypothesis.** Finally, it was hypothesized that female participants who received the brief sexual educational program would rate themselves significantly lower on The Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, Attraction to Sexual Aggression Scale, and the

Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale than male participants. Researchers believe sex mitigates the effectiveness of a rape educational program; therefore, it is a main effect and not an interaction in this study. This hypothesis was included due to the findings by Anderson and Whiston (2005), discussed above, that show that women are less accepting of negative attitudes toward women than men are. This meta-analysis also found that the programs are more affective for female participants.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

The researcher recruited participants from psychology classes within a moderately sized public university in the Midwestern United States. There were 128 participants in the study, meeting the requirements to have sufficient power (Cohen, 1992). The study included 52 males (40.6%) and 76 females (59.4%), with a mean age of 18.87 (SD = 1.56 and range = 18-28). The study included 113 (88.3%) Caucasians, 4 African Americans (3.1%), 8 Hispanics (6.3%), and 2 people identifying their race as “Other” (1.6%) (one participant did not identify a race). Of the participants, 92 participants were freshmen, 21 were sophomores, 11 were juniors, and 4 were seniors. Participants were from Introduction to Psychology classes, and they received partial course credit or extra credit for their participation as outlined by the instructors.

### **Material and Procedures**

The researcher randomly assigned participants to the brief educational program, traditional educational program, or a control group. The brief educational program group

received a typed paragraph combining two briefings used in pornography research (Check & Malamuth, 1984; Malamuth & Check, 1984), attached in the Appendix. The researcher of the current study edited the briefing to become an education program. The briefing contained educational information designed to point out the violent nature of rape, as well as to dismiss rape myths. It also contained a warning to participants about pairing violence with sexual stimuli.

Participants in the traditional educational program watched a taped version of a traditional rape educational program entitled, “The Date Rape Backlash” (Jhally, 1994). O’Donohue et al. (2003) used this educational program as a “typical” rape educational program. The movie included a definition of rape, the idea that rape involves violence and not sex, and a discussion of the forces within society that reinforces violence against women. The video utilizes the feminist view of rape and was 57 minutes in length.

Participants in the control group simply filled out the survey questionnaires; as did the other two groups when they finished the briefing or video. When the participants finished with the questionnaire, the researcher thanked the participants for their participation and verbally debriefed them about the purpose of the study. The debriefing used in the study discussed the purpose of the study and contains the brief piece of education used in the study, so that the researcher exposed all participants to a rape educational program.

**Attraction to sexual aggression.** Malamuth (1989) created the Attraction to Sexual Aggression Scale. The scale contains items that measure how likely a person will

be to become sexually aggressive, if not fearful of punishment. The scale contains distracter items asking about sexual acts in general and grouped into subscales including: The Attraction to Bondage (12 items), Attraction to Conventional Sex (18 items), Attraction to Homosexuality (5 items), Attraction to Unconventional Sex (11 items), and Attraction to Deviant Sex (12 items). The scale contains 72 items total. The researcher used the Attraction to Sexual Aggression Scale short form in the current study. The Attraction to Sexual Aggression Scale short form does not contain the distracter subscales.

The first thirteen items of the scale list sexual actions and ask if the participant has ever thought of trying the activity. One such item asks: “People frequently think about different activities even if they never do them. For each of the activities listed, please indicate whether or not you have ever thought of trying the activity.” Then the item listed rape and asked if the participant had ever thought of it. Participants responded either “have thought of it” or “have never thought of it.”

Next, the survey asks the participant how attractive he or she found each action. Participants respond rating the actions on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from “very unattractive” to “very attractive.” Participants then rate what percentage of males and females would find the actions sexually arousing rated on an 11-point Likert scale ranging from 0% to 100%. Next, the participants indicated how arousing they found each of the acts rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from “very unarousing” to “very



arousing.” Finally, the participant stated how likely they would be to do each of these if guaranteed no punishment.

This measure is included to determine if the educational piece was effective in decreasing the acceptance of violence against women in the experimental group. The scale was totaled by adding up the scores on each item. The internal consistency of the entire scale is .91 (Malamuth, 1989). The Cronbach’s alpha for the entire scale is .66. The scale’s validity was determined by correlating the scale with scales measuring similar constructs. The scale was ascertained to be correlated with Burt’s scale assessing Rape Myth Acceptance  $r=.41, p<.01$ .

**Rape myth acceptance scale.** Burt (1980) developed The Rape Myth Acceptance Scale to assess negative attitudes toward women. This scale measures how much each participant holds beliefs in false information about rape. This scale contains thirteen items and utilizes three different types of Likert rating scales for its questions. The first eleven questions ask participants to “Answer the following questions by deciding which is closest to your own opinion, by filling in the blank. There is no right or wrong answer.” The participants then look at each statement such as: “A woman who goes to the home of apartment of a man on their first date implies that she is willing to have sex,” and used a 7-point Likert rating scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” to endorse their opinion. The last two questions utilize the same instructions. However, in giving their opinions, participants are asked to estimate a

percentage. The responses the participant can give range from “almost all” to “almost none.”

This scale was included to assess the effectiveness of the brief education to decrease negative attitudes toward women. The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale is .88, which indicates good reliability. Burt did not report information on the validity of this scale. The researcher removed the last question due to lack of face validity. The researcher reverse scored items as required. Finally, the researcher totaled the scale by adding the score from each item.

**Acceptance of interpersonal violence scale.** Burt (1980) created the Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence scale to measure beliefs a participant held that were consistent with the use of violence or force in relationships. Indeed, Burt defined acceptance of interpersonal violence as “the notion that force and coercion are legitimate ways to gain compliance and specifically that they are legitimate in intimate and sexual relationships” (Burt, 1980, p. 218).

The measure contains six items. Within the scale, participants were asked to, “Answer the following questions by deciding which is closest to your own opinion, by filling in the blank. There is no right or wrong answer.” Participants then were given statements that they could rate their agreement with the statement on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree,” to “strongly disagree.” An item from the scale for example was “Being roughed up is sexually stimulating to many women” (Burt, 1980, p. 222).

This scale was included to assess the level of acceptance of violence against women a participant holds. Burt (1980) listed the reliability of the scale as a Cronbach's alpha of .58. Burt (1980) did not assess the validity of the scale. The researcher also created a composite score for this scale by totaling the score for each item, after reverse scoring appropriate items.

## **Results**

### **Preliminary Analyses**

**Data cleaning.** After the collected data was entered into SPSS, the researcher conducted preliminary analyses to ensure accuracy of data entry. The researcher used frequency distributions to find invalid and missing scores. The researcher then verified missing data. The researcher decided to use the default SPSS procedure of excluding missing data. Once data screening was complete, the researcher reversed scored items as required and created composite scores for scales.

Once the composite scores were calculated, the researcher split the file by sex. The research decided to use a split file for sex due to the findings of Anderson and Whiston (2005) that indicated there was a significant affect of sex on the effectiveness of rape education programs. The researcher then computed the descriptive statistics for the data.

**Descriptive statistics.** For males, the results were: Attraction to Sexual Aggression Scale ( $M=23.18$ ,  $SD=8.36$ ), Rape Myth Acceptance scale ( $M=35.51$ ,  $SD=7.03$ ), and Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence ( $M=17.49$ ,  $SD=4.55$ ). For females,

the results were: Attraction to Sexual Aggression Scale ( $M=20.41$ ,  $SD=4.82$ ), Rape Myth Acceptance scale ( $M=32.12$ ,  $SD=9.01$ ), and Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence ( $M=15.55$   $SD=5.34$ ).

**Reliability.** The researcher then calculated the reliability of each scale using Cronbach's alpha. For males on the Attraction to Sexual Aggression Scale, the Cronbach's alpha was .89. For females, the Cronbach's alpha was .69. On the Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, for males the Cronbach's alpha was .72. For females, the Cronbach's alpha was .79. For males on the Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence, the Cronbach's alpha was .37 and for females, it was .56.

## **Main Results**

**Overall hypothesis.** A 2 X 3 MANOVA was conducted that used the Attraction to Sexual Aggression, Rape Myth Acceptance, and Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scales. To complete this statistical test, the researcher utilized the split the data file procedure in SPSS. The researcher ran a split file one-way MANOVA, *instead* of a factorial MANOVA, because Anderson and Whiston (2005) found a significant affect of sex on the effectiveness of rape education programs.

The MANOVA was conducted in order to assess if participants in the control ( $n=42$ ), traditional ( $n=46$ ), and brief ( $n=40$ ) groups differed in their scores on measures of attraction to sexual aggression, rape myth acceptance, and acceptance of interpersonal violence. Preliminary data screening indicated that requirements of the MANOVA, of linear association between outcomes was not seriously violated. Pearson's  $r$  correlations

were conducted in order to determine the relationship between the dependent variables. For males, scores on Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence were found to be significantly correlated with Attraction to Sexual Aggression,  $r(49)=.35, p<.05$ , and Rape Myth Acceptance,  $r(50)=.35, p<.05$ . For females, scores on Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence were significantly correlated only with Rape Myth Acceptance,  $r(75)=.50, p<.05$ .

The data did not violate the assumption of multivariate normality of the MANOVA. When the scores of participants on Attraction to Sexual Aggression, Rape Myth Acceptance, and Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence were plotted using a scatter plot, it was discovered that the relationship between all the possible pairs were positive with few bivariate outliers for both males and females. When the scores of participants on Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence, Attraction to Sexual Aggression, and Rape Myth Acceptance were plotted using histograms, it was discovered that for both males and females that the scores on these measures were roughly normally distributed.

For males, the data did not violate the assumption of homogeneity of variance. However, the data did violate the assumption of homogeneity of covariance. The Box *M* test was significant,  $F(12, 2243.76)=1.76, p<.05$ . For females, the data did not violate the assumption of homogeneity of covariance. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was violated for Rape Myth Acceptance,  $F(2,72)=7.08, p<.05$ . The violations of the assumptions of homogeneity of variance and covariance required the use of Pillai's Trace for both males and females as the multivariate test statistic. The results of the overall

MANOVA for males led to the retention of the null hypothesis,  $F(6,88)=1, p>.05$ . The results of the overall MANOVA for females led to the retention of the null hypothesis,  $F(6,142)=1.81, p>.05$ .

**Negative attitudes toward women hypothesis.** The overall MANOVA was not significant. Therefore, the negative attitudes toward women hypothesis was not supported.

**Attitudes supportive of aggression against women hypothesis.** Due to the overall MANOVA not being supported, the attitudes supportive of aggression against women hypothesis was not supported.

**Sex hypothesis.** The researcher then turned off the split file and conducted a one-way MANOVA to determine if male ( $n=48$ ) and female ( $n=75$ ) participants differed significantly on the score of the Attraction to Sexual Aggression, Rape Myth Acceptance, and Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scales. The assumption of homogeneity of variance and covariance were both violated. The Box  $M$  test was significant,  $F(6, 67087.29)=3.52, p<.05$ . The Levene's test of equality of error variance for Attraction to Sexual Aggression was significant,  $F(1,121)=7.8, p<.05$ . The Levene's test for equality of error variance for Rape Myth Acceptance was significant,  $F(1,121)=3.95, p<.05$ . The violations of the assumptions of homogeneity of variance and covariance required the use of Pillai's Trace as the multivariate test statistic.

The results of the overall MANOVA led to the rejection of the null hypothesis,  $F(3,119)=2.71, p<.05$ . The strength of the association between sex and score on

Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence, Rape Myth Acceptance, and Attraction to Sexual Aggression was  $\eta^2=.06$ ; that is around 6% of the variance in scores on the scales was accounted for by sex. Scores on Rape Myth Acceptance was found to be significantly different for females ( $M=32.23$ ,  $SD=9.02$ ) and males ( $M=35.31$ ,  $SD=6.68$ ),  $F(1,123)=4.16$ ,  $p<.05$ . The strength of the difference in scores for males and females on Rape Myth Acceptance was  $\eta^2=.53$ . That is 53% of the difference in scores on Rape Myth Acceptance was accounted for by sex. Scores on Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence was found to be significantly different for females ( $M=15.55$ ,  $SD=5.34$ ) and males ( $M=17.67$ ,  $SD=4.61$ ),  $F(1,123)=5.13$ ,  $p<.05$ . The strength of the difference in scores for males and females on Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence was  $\eta^2=.61$ ; that is 61% of the variance in scores on this measure is accounted for by sex. Therefore, the sex hypothesis was supported by the findings.

### **Supplementary Result**

The researcher then ran analyses to determine if demographic variables outside sex affected the dependent variables. A One-way MANOVA was conducted to assess if academic year affected Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence, Rape Myth Acceptance, and Attraction to Sexual Aggression. The one-way MANOVA was conducted in order to assess if freshmen ( $n=90$ ), sophomores ( $n=20$ ), juniors ( $n=9$ ), and seniors ( $n=4$ ) differed significantly on their scores on the measures. Neither the assumption of homogeneity of variance nor the assumption of homogeneity of covariance were violated.

The results of the overall MANOVA led to the rejection of the null hypothesis,  $F(9,357)=2.086, p<.05$ . The strength of the association between academic year and score on the scales was  $\eta^2=.05$ . That is 5% of the variance in scores on the measures was accounted for by academic year. The scores on Attraction to Sexual Aggression were found to be significantly different for freshman ( $M=20.54, SD=5.22$ ), sophomores ( $M=24.40, SD=8.97$ ), juniors ( $M=19.89, SD=7.93$ ), and seniors ( $M=26.25, SD=7.93$ ),  $F(3, 123)=3.30, p<.05$ .

However, when a post-hoc Tukey test was ran it was found that none of the differences between the groups were significant.

A MANOVA to determine if race impacted scores on Attraction to Sexual Aggression, Rape Myth Acceptance, and Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence could not be conducted because of lack of validity of such a test due to extremely unequal groups (Caucasians ( $n=109$ ), Africa Americans ( $n=4$ ), Asians ( $n=1$ ), Hispanics ( $n=7$ ), and those identified as “Other” race ( $n=2$ )). A MANOVA determine if age impacts scores on Attraction to Sexual Aggression, Rape Myth Acceptance, and Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence could not be conducted again due to extremely unequal groups (18 year olds ( $n=70$ ), 19 year olds ( $n=33$ ), 20 year olds ( $n=10$ ), 21 year olds ( $n=6$ ) and those 22 and older ( $n=4$ )).

## **Discussion**

Whether researchers use official statistics or not, rape is a problem in our country. Researchers have spent countless hours developing rape education programs. Such



programs are usually lengthy. No researcher has attempted to create a brief rape education program. The current study attempted to create a brief rape education program. This education program was borrowed from pornography research where it was found effective in lowering negative attitudes towards women and attitudes supportive of violence against women (Check & Malamuth, 1984; Malamuth & Check, 1984).

The overall hypothesis that participants in the brief educational group rated their attitudes accepting of aggression against women and negative attitudes toward women as significantly lower than participants given no educational program; and equal to those who are given a traditional educational program, was not supported. The overall MANOVA conducted with the split file on was not significant for males or females.

The negative attitudes toward women hypothesis that participants in the brief sexual assault educational group rated themselves significantly lower on the Rape Myth Acceptance Scale than participants given no educational program; and equal to those who are given a traditional educational program, was not supported. Due to the overall MANOVA being nonsignificant, this hypothesis was not supported.

The attitudes supportive of aggression toward women hypothesis that participants in the brief educational group rated themselves as significantly lower on the Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale and the Attraction to Sexual Aggression Scale than participants given no educational program; and equal to those who are given a traditional

educational program, was not supported. This is again due to the lack of significant findings on the overall MANOVA.

The sex hypothesis: Female participants who receive the brief sexual educational program rated themselves significantly lower on The Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, Attraction to Sexual Aggression Scale, and the Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale than male participants was supported by the data. The study found that males scored significantly higher on measures of Rape Myth Acceptance and Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence.

The only significant finding of this study was that men hold more incorrect views about sex and that they are more accepting of violence in relationships. This study did not show that a brief education method is as effective as a traditional program. However, those in the traditional video group did not score significantly different from the control group.

### **Relation to Previous Findings**

These findings are inconsistent with previous research. They are contradictory with the results of research that education can be useful as crime prevention. Haughton (1855) argued that those who committed crimes were usually uneducated. The Center on Crime, Communities, and Culture (1997) created a report of research on education and crime, finding that as education increased crime decreased. Harer (1994) found that recidivism was reduced by education. When education is required in countries, crime

decreases (Lochner & Moretti, 2004). Ali and Peek (2009) found spending on education to be related to crime rate.

The results of this study are incompatible with research that has shown that sexual assault education programs are successful. According to Anderson and Whinston, (2005) sexual assault education program changes attitudes toward rape and increases knowledge related to rape. Rape education programs are also effective at reducing rape myth belief (Foubert & Newberry, 2006). Such programs are also able to challenge rape myths and decrease rape-supportive attitudes (Hillenbrand-Gunn et al., 2010).

Further, the results of this study are inconsistent with past research that has shown that brief education can be effective. Bergen-Cico and Kimer (2010) used brief education to help participants correctly identify how much they drink. Nurses have found brief education helpful and providing health information to patients (Sand-Jecklin et al., 2010). Larson et al. (2010) found brief education effective in teaching patients about asthma. Warning labels in print ads have been found effective (Torres et al., 2007). Anti-smoking ads have been found effective for students (Sabbane et al., 2009).

The findings here are also conflicting with the finding that written education can be effective. Morris and Halperin (1979) found written information effective in providing medical information. It can be just as effective as a video (Murphy et al., 2000). Pamphlets were also found effective in communicating information (Wilson et al., 2010). Finally, this study is incompatible with past pornography research showing this particular briefing to be effective in reducing the scores on the dependent variables

(Malamuth & Check, 1984). Pornography research has found briefings in general effective (Allen et al., 1996).

The one significant finding of the current research effort is consistent with past research. Anderson and Whiston (2005) found that males rated themselves significantly higher than females on measures of Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence, Rape Myth Acceptance, and Attraction to Sexual Aggression. This study had similar results.

### **Limitations**

There are a few reasons why this study did not show significant results. The traditional rape education piece was created the 1990's. One participant commented that this information was 20 years old. Perhaps the fact that this video was so outdated made it less effective. The researcher used this video because it had been shown to be an effective rape education program (O'Donohue et al., 2003). Perhaps this video was effective in this previous study because it was more current and relevant.

In addition, a participant commented that the video was obviously from a liberal feminist slant. Conservative men have been found to be more accepting of rape myths (Anderson, & Whiston, 2005). Therefore, the target audience of rape education programs is usually conservative men. Perhaps, the political aspects of the video confounded its effects as a rape education program. It is possible that the political aspects distracted participants from the rape prevention message.

Another limitation of the current study is sample size. There were only 48 males in the sample as compared to 75 females. This small number of males led to less than 20

males in each condition. One condition, the briefing group, had only eight participants. It is likely that this small sample size led to the nonsignificant results. A follow up study conducted using a different traditional rape education program maybe useful.

Another limitation of the current research is that the reliability of the Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale was poor. It was lower than that suggested by its author. The data for female participants is consistent with the data Burt (1980) presented. A suggestion for future research would be to find a different measure that assesses this construct with greater reliability.

A further limitation of the current study is the nonrandom convenience sampling that the researcher used. Jannink, Bennen, Blaauw, Diest, and Baak (1995) conducted a study comparing convenience sampling with random sampling. Random sampling was found to be more likely to be reproducible and better prognostic values for breast cancer patients. It is possible that the current sample is not representative as the overall population of the United States. Due to the nonrandom nature of the sample, the results may not be generalizeable.

Perhaps the fact that the students who participated in the current research effort were all psychology students could affect the results. Stein (1997) compared psychology graduate students with law students. The results of the study were that psychology students had greater empathy than did law students. It is possible that psychology students differ from the general population in their Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence, Rape Myth Acceptance, and Attraction to Sexual Aggression. Perhaps psychology

students are more empathic they are less accepting of interpersonal violence, rape myths, and less attracted to sexual aggression?

The current student sampled purely college students. Although this is a convention in research, it is important to mention that college students could differ from the general population. Peterson (2001) conducted a meta-analysis of studies comparing studies that used college students and nonstudents. The responses of college students were found to be slightly more homogeneous, have different effect sizes, and varied directionally and in magnitude from those of nonstudents. Perhaps college students are less likely to endorse attitudes supportive of aggression against females and rape myths than the general population. It would be interesting for future researchers to gain a more representative sample.

Another interesting point worth mentioning is that the researchers collected data in groups for this experiment. Research has shown that data collected in groups is not significantly different from data collected individually (Twinn, 2001). Burns, Zaslofsky, Kanive, and Parker (2012) conducted a meta-analysis of group versus individual research collection. The authors found that group data collection did not significantly differ from individual data collection. Therefore, the current research is likely not influenced by the group data collection.

Participants sat in their classroom and filled out this survey that contained items asking them how likely they were to become sexually aggressive. It is possible that the participants felt social pressure to respond that they would never commit such an act.

Asch (1951) conducted a classic study of group conformity. Researchers asked participants which line was longer and then pressured them to conform to a group answering incorrectly. Participants were likely to conform to the group decision.

A possible confound of the current research is standardization of administration. The researcher did make an effort to have a standard administration by reading a recruiting prompt to all participants before splitting them into groups. However, the researcher did make use of research assistants. It is possible that the research assistants administered the survey in nonstandardized way.

### **Future Research**

There are multiple different directions future researchers to take in future studies. The current study had flaws that may have contributed to the nonsignificant findings. A future researcher may wish to replicate this study and eliminate the flaws. The first major flaw that future researchers may want to address is sample size. Although the current research recruited enough participants to have adequate power overall, there were some of the cells in the research that did not have enough participants. Future researchers may wish to incorporate a quota for males and females.

Another major issue of the current study was the reliability of Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence. The reliability that Burt (1980) reported was .58. This reliability is not very high. However, the researcher chose to use this scale because researchers have successfully used this scale in previous research. The findings of this current study

suggest that the scale may not be reliable. Therefore, future researchers would be wise to use a different scale.

A final flaw that future researchers would be wise to correct is the choice of traditional rape education program. The researcher selected the video due to its successful use in O'Donohue et al. (2003). However, as pointed out above, this study was conducted ten years ago when the information in the video was more relevant. Perhaps using a more recently produced rape education program would lead to significant results.

Another flaw with this video is its obvious feminist and liberal slant. One participant commented on the fact that the video seemed to be a liberal propaganda piece. Perhaps the political aspects of the video were off putting to some of the participants. Perhaps this influences the ability of the video to function as a rape education program. Therefore, future researcher should use a video that is not biased and newer.

Past research has found that females endorse less rape myths than males. Researchers have not determined why. The current research has found that females endorse less negative attitudes toward women and attitudes supportive of violence against women. It would be interesting to determine why there is such a difference. Is it because sexual violence is commonly discussed as being directed toward women? Would the results be different if the scales measured attitudes supportive of violence against men?

Another possible theory is that women are simply more enlightened and less prone to violence than men. It would be interesting to compare women and men's



inclination toward violence. It would also be interesting to test if women simply hold views of relationships between men and women that are more liberal than men's views.

It would be interesting for future researchers to test if the sex of the researcher affects the results of the study. It is possible with such delicate subject matter that participants may prefer one sex to the other. The current researcher utilized both male and female research assistants. Perhaps using both sexes influenced the result

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## **Appendix A**

### **Pre-briefing**

While the following is probably obvious to all subjects, we would like to emphasize that pornographic stories are COMPLETE FANTASY. Some such stories depict sexual assault. In reality, as you hopefully were aware, sexual assault is a terrible crime, and in the United States is punishable by many years in prison. Indeed, sexual assault victims suffer severe psychological damage as well as the more obvious physical effects of the assault. Although sexual assault is a terrible crime, sexual assault themes are frequently found in erotic magazines. In pornographic magazines and books, writers will often present sexual violence (e.g. rape) with other highly explicit and arousing material. Over time, people may tend to ignore the violence of sexual assault because there are other sexually pleasing aspects to the stories. We do not want you to feel however, that your past responses to such media are in any way wrong or deviant; because these stories were designed to be highly sexually arousing, and do not in any way reflect the true horror of real sexual assault. Unfortunately, many people still believe a number of falsehoods or myths about sexual assault. For example, one totally unfounded myth is that if a woman does not immediately report a sexual assault, or hesitates to report it, then the act is somehow not considered a real sexual assault. A second falsehood is that if a woman does anything which puts her at greater risk or makes her more vulnerable to being victimized (e.g., going to a man's apartment, wearing enticing clothing, etc.) she somehow brings the sexual assault upon herself. These are in fact just myth and are totally unfounded. I hope that you will leave this experiment with a more realistic and accurate view of sexual assault.

## Appendix B

### Scales

**Attraction to Sexual Aggression (short form).** Answer the following questions by deciding which is closest to your own opinion; there is no right or wrong answer

1. People frequently think about different activities even if they never do them. For each of the activities listed, please indicate whether or not you have ever thought of trying the activity
  - a. Rape
    - a. Have thought of it    b. Have never thought of it
  - b. Forcing a person to do something sexual that he or she didn't want to do
    - a. Have thought of it    b. Have never thought of it
2. Whether or not you have ever thought of it do you find the idea:
  - a. Rape
    - a. Very unattractive    b. Somewhat unattractive    c. Somewhat attractive    d. Very attractive
  - b. Forcing a person to do something sexual he or she didn't want to do
    - a. Very unattractive    b. Somewhat unattractive    c. Somewhat attractive    d. Very attractive
3. What percentage of males do you think would find the following activities sexually arousing?
  - a. Rape
    - a. 0 %    b. 10%    c. 20%    d. 30%    e. 40%    f. 50%    g. 60%    h. 70%    i. 80%    j. 90%    k. 100%
  - b. Forcing a female to do something sexual she didn't want to do
    - a. 0 %    b. 10%    c. 20%    d. 30%    e. 40%    f. 50%    g. 60%    h. 70%    i. 80%    j. 90%    k. 100%
4. What percentage of females do you think would find the following activities sexually arousing?
  - a. Rape
    - a. 0 %    b. 10%    c. 20%    d. 30%    e. 40%    f. 50%    g. 60%    h. 70%    i. 80%    j. 90%    k. 100%
5. What percentage of females do you think would find the following activities sexually arousing?

- a. Forcing a male to do something sexual he didn't want to do
  - a. 0 % b. 10% c. 20% d. 30% e. 40% f. 50% g. 60% h. 70% i. 80% j. 90% k. 100%
- 6. How sexually arousing do you think you would find the following sexually activities if you engaged in them (even if you have never engaged in them)?
  - a. Rape
    - a. Very unarousing b. Somewhat unarousing c. Somewhat arousing d. Very arousing
  - b. Forcing a person to do something sexual he or she didn't want to do
    - a. Very unarousing b. Somewhat unarousing c. Somewhat arousing d. Very arousing
- 7. If you could be assured that no one would know and that you could in no way be punished for engaging in the following acts, how likely, if at all would you be to commit such acts.
  - a. Rape
    - a. Very unlikely b. Somewhat unlikely c. Somewhat likely d. Very arousing likely
  - b. Forcing a person to do something sexual he or she didn't want to do
    - a. Very unlikely b. Somewhat unlikely c. Somewhat likely d. Very arousing like

**Rape Myth Acceptance Scale.** Answer the following questions by deciding which is closest to your own opinion, by filling in the blank. There is no right or wrong answer.

- a. strongly agree
- b. agree
- c. somewhat agree
- d. undecided
- e. somewhat disagree
- f. disagree
- g. strongly disagree

1. A woman who goes to the home or apartment of a man on their first date implies that she is willing to have sex. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Any female can get raped. \_\_\_\_\_
3. One reason that women falsely report a rape is that they frequently have a need to call attention to themselves. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Any healthy woman can successfully resist a rapist if she really wants to. \_\_\_\_\_
5. When women go around braless or wearing short skirts and tight tops, they are just asking for trouble. \_\_\_\_\_
6. In the majority of rapes, the victim is promiscuous or has a bad reputation. \_\_\_\_\_
7. If a girl engages in necking or petting and she lets things get out of hand, it is her own fault if her partner forces sex on her. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Women who get raped while hitchhiking get what they deserve. \_\_\_\_\_
9. A woman who is stuck-up and thinks she is too good to talk to guys on the street deserves to be taught a lesson. \_\_\_\_\_
10. Many women have an unconscious wish to be raped, and may then unconsciously set up a situation in which they are likely to be attacked. \_\_\_\_\_
11. If a woman gets drunk at a party and has intercourse with a man she's just met there she should be considered "fair game" to other males at the party who want to have sex with her too, whether she wants to or not. \_\_\_\_\_



Answer the following questions by deciding which is closest to your own opinion, by filling in the blank. There is no right or wrong answer.

- a. strongly agree
- b. agree
- c. somewhat agree
- d. undecided
- e. somewhat disagree
- f. disagree
- g. strongly disagree

12. What percentage of women who report a rape would you say are lying because they are angry and want to get back at the man they accuse?

- a. almost all   b. about  $\frac{3}{4}$    c. about half   d. about  $\frac{1}{4}$    e. almost none

13. What percentage of reported rapes would you guess were merely invented by women who discovered they were pregnant and wanted to protect their own reputation?

- a. almost all   b. about  $\frac{3}{4}$    c. about half   d. about  $\frac{1}{4}$    e. almost none

**Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale.** Answer the following questions by deciding which is closest to your own opinion, by filling in the blank. There is no right or wrong answer.

- a. strongly agree
- b. agree
- c. somewhat agree
- d. undecided
- e. somewhat disagree
- f. disagree
- g. strongly disagree

1. People today should not use "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" as a rule for living. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Being roughed up is sexually stimulating to many women. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Many times a woman will pretend she doesn't want to have intercourse because she doesn't want to seem loose, but she's really hoping the man will force her.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. A wife should move out of the house if her husband hits her. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Sometimes the only way a man can get a cold woman turned on is to use force.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. A man is never justified in hitting his wife. \_\_\_\_\_

**Demographic information.**

1. Age \_\_\_\_\_
2. Gender
  - a. Male   b. Female
3. Academic year
  - a. Freshman
  - b. Sophomore
  - c. Junior
  - d. Senior
  - e. 5th+ Year
  - f. Graduate Student
4. Race
  - a. Caucasian
  - b. African American
  - c. Asian
  - d. Hispanic
  - e. Other